

Eastern Equine Encephalitis

What is Eastern Equine Encephalitis?

Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) is a mosquito-borne viral disease. EEE occurs in the eastern half of the US. Because of the rate of death among infected persons, it is regarded as one of the more serious mosquito-borne diseases in the United States.

Who gets EEE?

Residents of and visitors to areas with an established presence of the virus and people who engage in outdoor work and recreational activities are at increased risk of getting the disease. Persons over age 50 and younger than age 15 seem to be at greatest risk for developing severe disease.

How is EEE spread?

EEE virus is transmitted to humans through the bite of an infected mosquito. Horses and certain birds like ostriches and emus can become infected with, and die from, EEE virus infection.

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms range from mild flu-like illness to encephalitis (inflammation of the brain), coma and death. About 35 percent of people who develop the disease die. It is estimated that 35 percent of people who survive EEE will have mild to severe neurologic after effects from this disease.

How many human cases of EEE have been reported in Virginia?

EEE was first reported in humans in Virginia in 1975. A total of five human cases have been reported through 2003. One case of EEE was reported in a human in 2003.

How can EEE infection be prevented?

1. Wear long, loose and light-colored clothing.
2. If possible, stay indoors when mosquitoes are biting.
3. Use insect repellent with the smallest percentage of DEET necessary for the length of time you are exposed to mosquitoes, but no more than 50% for adults and 30% for children under 12.
4. Turn over or remove containers in your yard where water collects, such as old tires, potted plant trays, buckets and toys.

5. Eliminate standing water on tarps or flat roofs.
6. Clean out birdbaths and wading pools once a week.
7. Clean roof gutters and downspout screens.
8. A vaccine is available to protect horses.

Where can I get more information on EEE?

Call your local health department or visit one of the following sites:

- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
- [American Mosquito Control Association](#)
- [Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services](#)
- [Virginia Mosquito control Association](#)
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